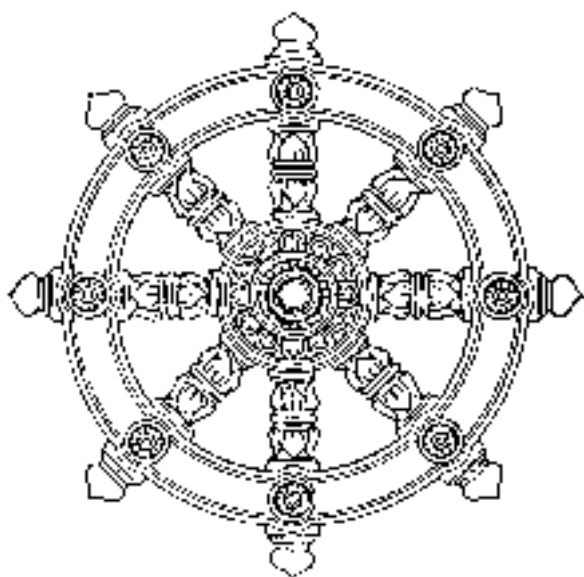


## *Lay Disciple Ordination*



Procession: Precentor asks all assembled to rise. Ino, doshi & jisha enter in procession; jisha carries three long sticks of incense and jikko is standing over by the ordination altar. Ino goes to the precentor seat; doshi goes to haishiki.

Three Full Bows: ◆<sup>R</sup> (Jisha does not end up doing any bows before the ordination.)

Incense offering as all take their seats: Gongs as doshi 1) ● does standing bow at haishiki, 2) ● leaves the main altar, and 3) ● bows again at haishiki. Jisha goes up and hands the doshi the three incense sticks in succession, and then returns to the jisha spot behind the haishiki.

“Heart of Great Perfect Wisdom Sutra:” Precentor intones, then all join in. Gongs as doshi 1) ● does standing bow at haishiki, 2) ● leaves the main altar, and 3) ● bows at ordination altar. After the doshi goes up to offer incense during the sutra, the jisha goes to the left side of the ordination altar. The jikko is on the right side of the ordination altar; jisha and jikko kneel and wait for the doshi to be seated, and then move the ordination altar closer to the doshi.

Offering and bows before main altar: The jisha gets up and leads the lay disciples to the main altar to make a powdered incense offering (one pinch each). Jisha and disciples walk to the *right* of the haishiki and up the stairs. The disciples are then led back down the other side of the stairs to the foot of the haishiki for three full bows toward the main altar, before being led back to their seats.

Offering and bows before ordination altar: In front of the ordination altar, the first disciple offers for the group as a whole, returns to his/her seat, and then the ordinees together bow three times and kneel upright.

The ordination master burns incense and recites the following quietly:

“Homage to all the Buddhas;  
“Homage to all the Dharmas;  
“Homage to all the Sanghas;  
“Homage to our Real Teacher, Shakyamuni Buddha;  
“Homage to all the Bodhisattva Ancestors.  
“I pray that you will all come here as Witnesses.

“Let us **chant** the names of Buddha.”

Precentor: Strikes the wooden blocks as indicated (□), while all assembled chant together:

- ☐ Vairochana Buddha, pure Dharmakaya
- ☐ Lochana Buddha, complete Sambhogakaya
- ☐ Shakyamuni Buddha, myriad Nirmanakaya
- ☐ Maitreya Buddha, of future birth
- ☐ All buddhas throughout space and time
- ☐ Lotus of the Wondrous Dharma, Mahayana sutra
- ☐ Manjushri Bodhisattva, great wisdom
- ☐ Samantabhadra Bodhisattva, great activity
- ☐ Avalokiteshvara Bodhisattva, great compassion
- ☐ Kshitagarba Bodhisattva, great vow
- ☐ All honored ones, bodhisattvas, mahasattvas
- ☐ Wisdom beyond wisdom, maha prajna paramita ☐

The master continues:

“You, good (man/woman), the source of the mind is completely calm and the Sea of the Dharma is fathomless. One who does not realize this sinks eternally, while one who does realize this will be enlightened instantaneously. It is through our vows of practice that we unknowingly enjoy enlightenment. Indeed, do not doubt. Through discipleship in Buddhism, both body and mind become one with the Truth. Why? Because through our vows and practice we harmonize our lives with the Truth. In our vows of mind and practice of body we manifest True freedom. The merit of vow and practice within discipleship is a most excellent one. There is merit in building a pagoda as high as the 33rd heaven, but compared to discipleship, the merit is one hundredth. A pagoda may become ruined and unusable, but the merit of discipleship is

always increasing towards enlightenment and will never lose its power for eternity. Therefore we can be far beyond all delusion without throwing away this earthly body. Even though we do not yet know our enlightenment, we are already the real children of Buddha. While we are dwelling in the six lokas, to dedicate one's body and mind to the Dharma is the highest life. Please think carefully. Now you are being released from eternal wandering and entering the no-birth country of Buddha. Delusion, which is beginningless, has now ceased, and the real merit of the Truth will be made complete. Therefore, in this vow and practice heaven neither covers us nor does the earth sustain. This square robe is the symbol of our practice and of enlightenment, one who sees it will gain much benefit. The merit of this is beyond all earthly obligation, even to deities, kings, and elders. Therefore you must worship nothing but the Dharma and your greater self. So it is that the verse says:

“In the drifting, wandering world it is very difficult to loose the  
bonds of human ties.

Now, releasing them, we enter nothingness.

This is real gratitude.’

“You, think of your parents’ and all your former teachers’ kindness to you and bow in gratitude to them. Tell your guardian deity what you are doing and repay his kindness to you. Also tell the deity in the place where you were born what you are doing. They will all guard you.”

The disciples bow once.

Jisha takes the disciples to the personal altar that has been placed at the back of the hall. One at a time, each disciple offers incense and recites the following:

“Your kindness to me is as deep as the ocean, and my gratitude knows no bounds. I wish to enter the store of the Scriptures that your wish for me may be fulfilled.”

The disciples, together, do one full bow.

Jisha takes the disciples to the Kanzeon altar. One at a time,

each disciple offers incense recites the following:

“Great Kanzeon, please witness my words; may I open my heart to all living things while compassion guides my way.”

The disciples, together, do one full bow.

Jisha takes the disciples to the Bodhidharma altar, which has been set up on the founder’s alta. One at a time, each disciple offers incense recites the following:

“Great Bodhidharma, please witness my words; may I realize the True Way, and the Highest Mind.”

The disciples, together, do one full bow.

Jisha takes the disciples to the foot of the haishiki, where they all do three more full bows to the Buddha.

Disciples return to their places in front of the ordination altar and sit down.

Lay ordination: The **master holds up the scissors and recites** the following three times:

“Good, you, great men and women, **realize** the drifting, wandering nature of things, leave it behind, and enter Nirvana. To do so is rare and cannot be accomplished with the ordinary mind.”

The **master asperges the disciples, then recites** the following verse three times:

“All Bodhisattvas, when converted to the Truth for the first time, earnestly search therefore: their minds become set on Truth; their resolve can no longer be broken. The merit of first mind is the widest and most completely fathomless. Even if Buddhas explain it fully, such explanation can never be enough.”

The **disciples bow three times** at their seats, then sit again.

In turn, each disciple approaches the ordination altar and kneels before the master, making gassho.

The ordination **master takes up the scissors again, and recites** the following three times:

“This portion of hair is called the shura. Only a Buddha can cut it off. I am going to cut it off. Do you permit me to do so or not?”

The **disciple replies** once to each repetition:

“I do.”

The **master then cuts a lock of hair** from the shura while **all assembled recite**:

“I have kept my form but refined my wish, letting go of worldly attachments; I will live my life in search for the Truth. I vow to help others.”

The **disciple bows once**, then kneels once again, making gassho. The **master gives them their new name**, written down, saying:

“This is your name.”

The **master then holds up the rakhusu**, censes it, and hands it to the disciple. The **disciple holds it up high, and recites the following**:

“Great Bodhisattvas, think wholeheartedly. I, the disciple (name), have been given this rakhusu, which has five stripes. I will always use it.”

The **disciple puts on the rakhusu**, while **all assembled chant**:

“How great the Robe of Liberation! A formless field of Benefaction.

“Wrapping ourselves in Buddha's teaching, we free all living beings.”

The disciple bows three times during the robe chant, and then returns to his/her place.

Giving the precepts: After all the disciples have received names and rakus, the **master recites the following:**

“If you want to be converted to the Precepts, you should first make confession. Even though in confession there are two meanings and two ways, there is a confession verse that has been kept by the Buddhas. Recite the verse after me, because when you do so, your past wrongdoing will lose its hold on you.”

The **master recites the confession verse**, and the **precentor strikes the kaishaku** at the end of each line. **All assembled repeat** the line after the master:

“All my past and harmful karma, □  
“Born from beginningless greed, hate, and delusion, □  
“Through body, speech, and mind, □  
“I now fully avow.” □

**The disciples bow once**, then kneels making gassho as before. **The master continues:**

“You have purified your body and mind from evil and become clean by the power of confession. You should be converted to the Three Treasures of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. There are three kinds of Three Treasures. When we are once converted the Three Merits are completed.”

The **master then asperges** the disciples three times, then asperges to the right and left three times each. Then (s)he makes gassho and recites the following, while the precentor strikes the kaishaku. **All assembled repeat each refuge.**

“Lay disciple(s), please recite after me. From this present human state to that of Buddhahood,

“I take Refuge in the Buddha, ☐  
“I take Refuge in the Dharma, ☐  
“I take Refuge in the Sangha, ☐  
“I take Refuge in the Highest Buddha, ☐  
“I take Refuge in the Most Immaculate Dharma, ☐  
“I take Refuge in the Harmonious Sangha, ☐  
“I take Refuge in the Buddha, ☐  
“I take Refuge in the Dharma, ☐  
“I take Refuge in the Sangha,” ☐

**The master continues:**

“Now you have left behind past wrong action and been turned towards the deepest Truth. From this time the Buddha, truest enlightenment, is your real teacher, so call the Buddha your teacher and do not turn away, toward wrong action or an outside path. This is my great compassion to you.”

The **disciples bow three times**, then kneel, making gassho.

The **master recites** the following:

“You have already been given the Three Treasures Precepts. Now you have the form of a lay disciple and should be given the Three Pure Precepts and the Ten Greater Precepts. Then you will obtain the rank of Buddha. This is to become the real child of Buddha.”

The **precentor claps the kaishaku** once at the beginning of each precept as the master recites:

☐ “Cease from evil - Release all self-attachment. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?”

The Disciple(s) and all assembled answer:

“I will.”



The Disciple(s) and all assembled make the same reply to each of the Precepts listed below as the Master recites them:

☐ “Do only good - Take selfless action. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

☐ “Do good for others - Embrace all things and conditions. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

“These three are called the Three Pure Precepts.

☐ “Do Not Kill - Cultivate and Encourage Life. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

☐ “Do not steal - Honor the Gift Not Yet Given. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

☐ “Do Not Misuse Sexuality - Remain Faithful in Relationships. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

☐ “Do Not Speak Dishonestly - Communicate Truthfully. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

☐ “Do Not Become Intoxicated - Polish Clarity, Dispel Delusion. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

☐ “Do Not Dwell on Past Mistakes - Create Wisdom from Ignorance. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

☐ “Do Not Praise Self or Blame Others - Maintain Modesty, Extol Virtue. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

☐ “Do Not Be Mean with Dharma or Wealth - Share Understanding, Give Freely of Self. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

☐ “Do Not Indulge Anger - Cultivate Equanimity. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

☐ “Do not defame the Three Treasures - Respect the

Buddha, Unfold the Dharma, Nourish the Sangha. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?

□ “These Ten Greater Precepts you must keep. From this present human state to that of becoming Buddha, will you keep this Precept or not?”

Next the **master recites the following**:

“Because all existence is marked by Dukkha, we begin our practice for the sake of our own suffering. Because all existence shares the same Buddha heart, we broaden our practice for the sake of others. Because the Dharma is unfathomably deep, we undertake endless practice for the sake of the Dharma. If you want to train in the Precepts in this threefold manner, you should now undertake the Fourfold Bodhisattva Vow. Let us chant together:”

The **precentor strikes the gong** before each vow, and **all chant together**:

- “Beings are numberless,  
“I vow to free them.  
“Delusions are inexhaustible,  
“I vow to end them.
- “Dharma gates are boundless,  
“I vow to enter them.
- “The Buddha way is unsurpassable,  
“I vow to realize it.”

The **disciples bow three times**, and the **master burns incense, makes gassho, then recites** the following offertory:

“Now the universe rejoices, the earth trembles, and the flowers fall. The Bodhisattvas of other worlds ask their Buddha what this means, and the Buddha replies that new disciples have been given the Pure, Great Precepts of the Bodhisattvas, and have taken their Fourfold Vow. They have been converted to the Truth by the master who received it before in the teaching of Shakyamuni, who is the Buddha of this world. The disciples will become Buddhas in the future

through this merit; therefore the universe rejoices. The Bodhisattvas, on hearing this explanation, bow towards you, saying, 'If this is so, you are the same as we. You are believing in and taking the Buddha for your master and making the Bodhisattvas your friends.' After receiving these Precepts and making these vows, you obtain their unbreakable merit. This is the Permanent Precept. I pray that you may always keep it. You must never lose it. To have attained to such a relationship and to possess such a pure body is surely to have attained the world of the Precepts. Is this not so? To whom do we offer this merit? To where do we offer it? The offering, the donor, and they who receive these great things are completely immaculate. There is nothing to be desired. Let us, together with all living things, offer this common merit to the highest Truth."

Jisha and jikko move the altar away from the ordination master, who then **goes to the main altar** and chants alone:

"Abiding in this ephemeral world  
"Like a lotus in muddy water,  
"The mind is pure and goes beyond.  
"Thus we bow to Buddha."

Closing Invocation: All chant together –

- All Buddhas throughout space and time,
- All Honored Ones, Bodhisattvas, Mahasattvas,
- Wisdom beyond wisdom, Maha Prajna Paramita.

Three Full Bows: ◆<sup>R</sup>

Three Standing Bows with Doshi: ◆□◆□◆

Recession: Informal, with hugs and congratulations.

*Seijo updated November 2013*